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Volume 18  
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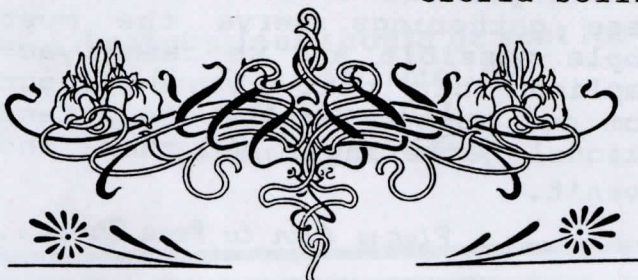
# Affirmation

## WILL THE UMC BOYCOTT COLORADO?

The Co-Spokespersons of the National Affirmation Council are in the process of getting on the agenda of the Commission of the General Conference Session. The commission will be holding a meeting in Denver during June to plan for the 1996 General Conference to be held in that city. The agenda of this meeting will provide time for discussion of the pros and cons of boycotting the state of Colorado and moving the General Conference to another location within the Western Jurisdiction. Gloria Soliz and Jay McCarty seek time on this agenda and, along with the Witness Committee of the National Council, will prepare a formal statement to be available in advance of the meeting.

While the UMC continues to "ban" open and visible lesbians, gay men, and bisexual from the ordained clergy, the denomination has a long tradition of support and commitment to human rights and social justice. The question facing the UMC is whether or not its homophobia will overshadow its proud legacy of human rights and social justice. No matter how The United Methodist Church responds, National Affirmation will have a ministry of presence at this historic meeting.

Gloria Soliz



## REPORT ON SPRING NATIONAL GATHERING IN D.C.

When we changed the official name of Affirmation to include the term "bisexual" we recognized the need to educate ourselves. To that end we have published articles in this newsletter and scheduled the programming for our spring meeting in D.C. to concentrate on bisexuality. We were most fortunate to have Lani Kaahumanu and Loraine Hutchins, editors of Bi Any Other Name, share their personal stories with us on Friday evening. It was the first time they had made a presentation together, so it was historic, and we were proud to provide that opportunity for them. Their sharing was educational, profound, entertaining, funny and challenging. We were moved by their honesty and openness, and they told us they were touched because people of faith, who are willing to share their experience and learn, had invited them to come.

The March on Washington on Sunday, April 25, had the official title of "1993 March on Washington for Lesbian, Gay and Bi Equal Rights and Liberation" and Lani had been asked to be the final speaker at the March, representing bisexuals. On Friday night we were proud to be the first to hear her speech entitled "It's Not Over 'til the Token Bisexual Speaks! She was the perfect choice as a speaker and her speech was outstanding--we gave her a standing ovation!

National Affirmation members Peggy Gaylord, Mary Jo Osterman, Ben Roe, and Randy Miller were the

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*Spring Gathering... From Page One...*

resource team for the weekend and provided a safe, caring space to explore the myths and realities of sexuality, and bisexuality in particular. Through various exercises which were fun, thought-provoking, and challenging, the depth of sharing among participants reached a level we agreed we had not experienced in a long time.

It rained through Saturday--was beautiful on Sunday--and started raining again on Monday, so it was as if God was smiling on us as we marched together. It seemed like many, many more than 300,000, but it's really hard to tell when you are in the middle of it! There was only one small knot of protesters, and we sang to them "Jesus loves us this we know, for the Bible tells you so." It was most gratifying to see the positive response from other marches and parade watchers to our representation from "the church." The whole spirit of the weekend was upbeat and the experience in D.C. was one of openness, acceptance, and celebration!

Sue Bock, Chair  
Program Committee

## FALL NATIONAL GATHERING

### Note Change of Place

Austin, Texas is the site for our National Gathering, October 8-10, 1993.

We had announced that we would meet in Indianapolis, but in our discussions have found that does not work well for our members this October. We will consider future dates. Thank you, Indianapolis. We look forward to visiting you in the future.

Plan now to join us in Austin, Texas, October 8-10, 1993.

## NATIONAL GATHERINGS EVALUATED

The Program Committee of the Council of National Affirmation is charged with coordinating National Gatherings. We are in the process of evaluating the timeliness and effectiveness of our gatherings and covet your help.

The policy of Affirmation has been that we hold national gatherings in cities where there is a local chapter and a Reconciling Congregation in which to worship--from whom we have an invitation. In recent years it has not always been possible to assure that all three criteria are met for each meeting. Our bylaws state that we will hold two national gatherings per year. We have made every attempt to not return to the same city two meetings in a row, but try to be sensitive to external extenuating circumstances.

Our last three National Gatherings have been scheduled to coincide with General Conference (Spring, 1992), Names Project AIDS Memorial Quilt Display (Fall, 1992), and March on Washington (Spring, 1993). After much discussion about all the pros and cons, it was the consensus of the Council that we needed to meet in conjunction with General Conference to support our presence there. We also were acutely aware that we could not compete successfully with the Quilt or the March, and were bound by bylaws, and tradition, to meet in the spring and fall of each year.

After evaluating the success of the last three gatherings, we are considering changes in the bylaws, if necessary, to give us more flexibility in scheduling national gatherings. It is our desire that these gatherings serve the most people possible and we cannot accomplish that goal without input from our members--those who attend national gatherings, and those who haven't.

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Suggested ideas include one national gathering a year and the opportunity for regional gatherings throughout the year to include more people. We are open to any ideas you have and have provided the opportunity for you to share your ideas on the ENCLOSED SURVEY. Please remove it from the newsletter, take four minutes to fill it out, fold it so the Affirmation address is on the outside, stamp it, and **MAIL IT BY JUNE 30, 1993.**

Let us know what you want and need.

Sue Bock, Chair  
Program Committee

## **AFFIRMATION HISTORY/HERSTORY**

James Waller is currently at work on a book dealing with the history, present situation, and future prospects of the lesbian and gay movement in American Protestant Christianity. Tentatively titled Beloved Disciples, the book is scheduled for publication in 1994 by Rutgers University Press.

He would like to talk with officers, past officers, or members of the organization about the circumstances of its founding the work in which we're now engaged, etc.

You may contact him either in writing at [REDACTED] Brooklyn, NY [REDACTED], or by calling him (collect, of course) at [REDACTED].

## **CAMP/RETREAT**

One of our goals is to hold the Natinal Gatherings at a camp or retreat center occasionally. We need your help in finding suitable locations for our group. We need a facility for 50 to 100 that would welcome Affirmation for a weekend.

If you know of a place, please send name, address, and phone number to Affirmation, P.O. Box 1021, Evanston, IL 60204. Thank you for your help.

## **LONG RANGE PLAN-- EVALUATION RESPONSES**

In general the responses were excellent in content, reasonable in number and from a good mix of our membership. Many members gave very thoughtful responses, often commenting on each subject.

We thank all of you who took the time to give us your considered thoughts. We appreciate you and your ideas very much.

The most common responses were:

1. **Membership:** Positive comments about the membership. Many urged building stronger links through membership between local groups and national organization. Membership would benefit from more specific services, such as names of contacts in near-by areas, local group information, more services to help people.
2. **Council Election/Structure:** Members like the structure and believe the Council is working well. Some concerns about the regional election process and how local groups are involved in the nomination process.
3. **National Meetings:** Very positive comments about General Conference and about the Atlanta meeting with Chris Glaser. Concern over the cost of meetings and not receiving information early enough to make plans to attend.
4. **Affiliate Groups:** Like the benefits of being an affiliate group, but many issues about linkage with national organization, renewal process for affiliation, and the struggles for local groups.
5. **Program Development:** Expressed appreciation for themes at national meetings and the work at General Conference.
6. **Communications:** Many positive comments about the Newsletter. Primary concern is timeliness of information, especially about upcoming national meetings. Hoped the Newsletter could cover items other than the Council information and national meetings, such as

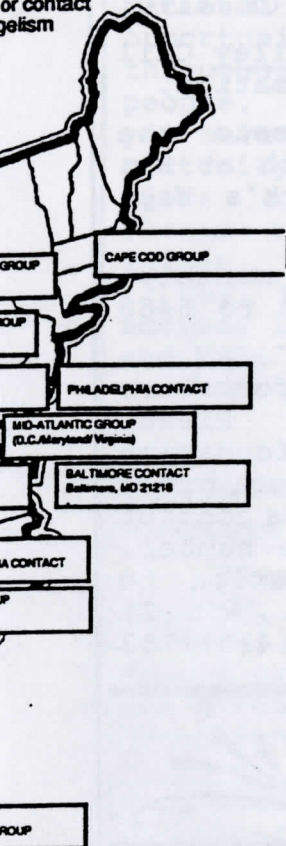
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groups.  
or contact  
gelism



## S THE COUNTRY...

ently had a Palm Sunday Worship celebration and met with Mark Bowman, CP Director. Future meetings include a special program on Holy unions, a picnic at the Annual Conference in Redlands and participation in the Christopher Street West Gay Pride Parade in West Hollywood. Bishop Roy Sano recently met with Affirmation to outline his views on the church and homosexuality. For additional information write to Affirmation Los Angeles, [redacted], West Hollywood, CA [redacted] or all [redacted].

Austin Affirmation meets bi-monthly for the usual potluck and program. Recent meetings have been in members' homes and local restaurants. For additional information write to Affirmation, [redacted], Austin, TX [redacted].

## ORDER FORM FOR

### AFFIRMATION MARCH ON WASHINGTON SOUVENIRS

Want to show your pride and your sense of community even if you couldn't be in Washington, DC, with those who actually marched? Buy your shirt, bag, or pins now. The design for all items except the generic button is the Affirmation logo colored with a lavender triangle, over the words "We Marched in Washington April 25, 1993," and an image of the Capitol is behind the words.

T-Shirts (50/50 White with Design)						quantity	price
Sizes Adult	S	M	L	XL	\$10.00 each	___	___
Size				XXL	\$12.00 each	___	___
Sweatshirts (9 oz. White or Birch Gray with Design)							
Sizes Adult	S	M	L		\$20.00 each	___	___
Sizes			XL	XXL	\$25.00 each	___	___
Baseball Hats (White with Design)					\$5.00 each	___	___
Totes							
Canvas Duffle Tote					\$10.00 each	___	___
Canvas Book Tote					\$ 6.00 each	___	___
Pins (2 1/4" back; lots of 6)							
Pin--We Marched in Wash. 4/25/93					\$ 6.00 each	___	___
Pin--Generic Affirmation Pin					\$ 6.00 each	___	___
UM's for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Concerns							
Shipping Charges--\$3 for first item, \$2 each additional						___	___
TOTAL						___	___

Mail Requests to: Susan Button, [redacted] Binghamton, NY [redacted]. Make check payable to Affirmation.

Please try to order by June 10, 1993, to avoid summer delays. We'll take orders past that time, but we may not be able to ship as quickly.

Affirmation in Chicago--Any Chicago area persons interested in study, reflection, and/or social activities please contact Steve Lobacz at [redacted] or write to [redacted] Chicago, IL [redacted].

Nashville Affirmation will retreat together at Penuel Ridge Retreat Center in Cheatham County on May 22. Potluck and fellowship at Edgehill UMC, 1502 Edgehill Ave. on May 27, June 26, and July 28 at 7 p.m.. For information about monthly meetings and other activities write to Affirmation, [redacted] Nashville, TN [redacted].

Affirmation of Wyoming Conference (NY/PA) continues to meet weekly on Sunday evenings at Tabernacle UMC, 83 Main St., Binghamton, NY, for worship, with other activities scheduled including potluck the first Sunday of each month prior to worship. New and returning clergy volunteer to lead worship as well as

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*News of Local Groups...from Page Five*

members of the group. The group joined one of the local churches for a spaghetti dinner which was a fund-raiser for them, and then Affirmation invited their members to watch the videotape of "Godspell" following the supper. That church is also advertising in the local gay secular newspaper that "All Are Welcome." Other recent meetings have included Rev. Paul Gere of the Lackawanna Prison Ministry, and Mary Welch of PFLAG. The highlight of the last quarter was a **Workshop on Gay Spirituality**, led by John J. McNeill, author of The Church and the Homosexual, and Taking a Chance on God: Liberating Theology for Gays, Lesbians, and Their Lovers, Families, and Friends. Topics included: Trust the Voice of God, Embracing Our Exile Status (including 12-step spirituality in a gay context), the Gay Love of God, and a panel, Sharing Our Spiritual Journeys. For information on how to contact John McNeill, or to contact this group, call [redacted] or write Affirmation, [redacted] Binghamton, NY [redacted]. This group has an incredible ministry and a wide range of programs.

**Central Virginia Affirmation** meets twice a month with a worship service and program the 2nd and 4th Mondays at Pace Memorial UMC, 700 West Franklin St., Richmond, VA. Recent activities have been a pizza night, celebration of the 17th anniversary of Dignity/Integrity, and a program about three Open and Affirming UCC congregations. For more information write [redacted] Richmond, VA [redacted] or call [redacted] or [redacted].

**Mid-Atlantic Affirmation** meets weekly for Sunday Evening worship services and Tuesday Evening Bible Study. For more information write to [redacted], Washington, DC [redacted].

**Affirmation Oklahoma City** meets the second and fourth Saturdays at 6:00 p.m. for a potluck and program. For more information write to [redacted] Oklahoma City, OK [redacted].

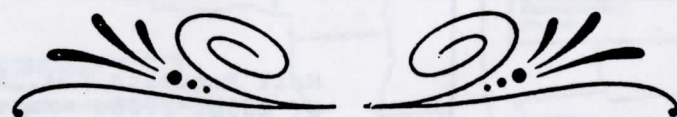
**Affirmation Tulsa** Information about this group can be received from [redacted], Tulsa, OK [redacted].

**Affirmation Susquehanna Valley** Call Joel at [redacted] for information.

**Affirmation Sacramento** meets the first Monday of every month at St. Mark's UMC, 2391 St. Mark's Way, Sacramento, CA 95864.

**Fresno Affirmation** meets monthly. For more information write to [redacted], Fresno, CA [redacted].

Fritz Scultz wants information about your local group. Please send your newsletter or information about when and where your group meets. Be sure to include a contact person or address or phone number. You can send all information to Fritz Schultz, [redacted] San Francisco, CA [redacted].



*Long Range Plan Evaluation Responses...  
from Page Three*

worship ideas, more sharing from local groups, and personal stories. national meetings. Hoped the Newsletter could cover items other than the Council information and national meetings, such as worship ideas, more sharing from local groups, and personal stories.

7. Fund Raising: Appreciate the work in fund raising and hoped a broader base could be developed.

8. Staffing: Some thought go for it! Others said we are not ready now. Mixed thoughts.

All of the comments are shared with the entire Council for appropriate review and action.

We are not able to respond individually to specific comments because addresses from envelopes were not retained with the reply form. Please send your burning question to: Affirmation, P.O. Box 1021, Evanston, IL 60204. We will get back to you.



The Program Committee of the Council of National Affirmation needs your input. We want to know how we can best meet the wants and needs of our membership for national gatherings, now held twice a year. A suggested idea is to hold one gathering a year instead of two.

Please take 4 minutes to fill out this survey, fold it so the Affirmation return address shows, stamp it, and mail by JUNE 30, 1993. Results will be reported in the next newsletter. THIS IS YOUR CHANCE TO LET US KNOW WHAT YOU THINK!

1. How many national gatherings/meetings have you attended? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Will you be more likely to attend a gathering if there is one meeting, instead of two, per year? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
3. Would you attend regional meetings in your area? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_  
Yes, if we go to one national meeting per year \_\_\_\_\_
4. What time of year do you prefer? (Rank 1 through 4 - 1 most preferable)  
Spring \_\_\_\_\_ Summer \_\_\_\_\_ Fall \_\_\_\_\_ Winter \_\_\_\_\_
5. What time of week? (Rank 1 through 3) Weekend \_\_\_\_\_ Weekday \_\_\_\_\_  
Combination of Weekday/Weekend \_\_\_\_\_
6. Indicate preferred combination of days. (example: Wed.-Sun.) \_\_\_\_\_
7. Preferred length of gathering. (Rank 1 through 4)  
2 days \_\_\_\_\_ 3 days \_\_\_\_\_ 4 days \_\_\_\_\_ 5 days \_\_\_\_\_
8. What setting to you prefer? (Rank 1 through 4)  
Church \_\_\_\_\_ Campus \_\_\_\_\_ Camp/Retreat Center \_\_\_\_\_ Hotel \_\_\_\_\_  
Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
9. What geographical area? (Rank 1 through 6) Northeast \_\_\_\_\_ Southeast \_\_\_\_\_ South \_\_\_\_\_ Southwest \_\_\_\_\_ Central \_\_\_\_\_ West \_\_\_\_\_
10. How much are you willing/able to spend to attend a gathering?  
(Registration, housing, travel, other incidental expenses) \$50 \_\_\_\_\_  
\$75 \_\_\_\_\_ \$100 \_\_\_\_\_ \$150 \_\_\_\_\_ \$200 \_\_\_\_\_ \$300 \_\_\_\_\_ \$400 \_\_\_\_\_ \$500 or more \_\_\_\_\_
11. I need a scholarship to attend gatherings. Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
12. Program/Topic Suggestions - please suggest speakers who can cover the preferred topics: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
13. Other suggestions/comments: (please be candid) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### O P T I O N A L

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Local Affirmation Group: \_\_\_\_\_

POSTAL REGISTRATION CARD

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POSTAL REGISTRATION CARD (Form No. 100)

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Evanston, IL 60204



## A LITURGICAL RESOURCE

(Possible use--Gay/Lesbian Pride activity)

Read Psalm 137:1-6

(Read antiphonally)

We are strangers in a strange, strange land.

We are sojourners in a foreign place.

How can we sing our songs to God in this time of exile?

How can we dance joyfully before the Creator?

We cling to the covenant that names us the children of God,

Praising God's faithfulness,  
God's affirmation of the oppressed.

And we dance by the waters of Babylon,

We sing our hymns of joy,

We sound the timbrel and the harp and the drum,

Playing and singing and dancing the songs of freedom.

You, O God, are generous in your love.

You hunger for righteousness and justice for all people.

Amen

And Amen.

### 1993 NEWSLETTER DEADLINES

Fall Publication: Aug. 10

Deadline: July 15

Winter Publication: Nov. 15

Deadline: Oct. 22

All submissions should be sent to:

National Affirmation

P.O. Box 1021

Evanston, IL 60204

## WANTED -- ITEMS FOR TWO NEW COLUMNS!

Hopefully to start in the Fall Issue of this Newsletter

**"THE CLOSET CORNER"** -- stories of how members have been able to "come out" to family and freinds--their experiences, and suggestions for those who are still in the closet.

**"OF THINGS SPIRITUAL"** -- personal stories of our relationship to God and of His love for us just as we are.

Send your stories to Newsletter, c/o Affirmation, P.O. Box 1021, Evanston, IL 60204. The dead-line for the Fall Issue is July 15!

## RECONCILING CONGREGATION BOARD

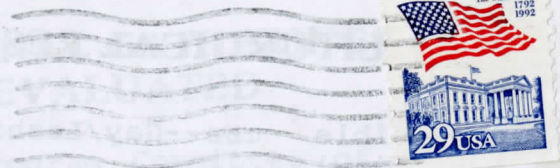
As part of our continuing agreement with the Reconciling Congregation Program (RCP), Affirmation has three members who serve on their Board of Directors, representing us. These members are full participants, working on committees, and actively fund raising for RCP. They serve three year terms. Currently on the Board for Affirmation are: Peggy Gaylord, Morris Floyd and Nancy Carter.

In October, the Affirmation Council will elect an Affirmation member to serve on the RCP Board for the next three years. We would like to have a pool of names available as we make this selection. Also, we will ask current members if they are willing to serve another term.

If you or someone you know would like to be on the Board, send name, address and phone number to Affirmation, P.O. Box 1021, Evanston, IL 60204.



P.O. Box 1021  
Evanston, IL 60204



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